

# FREDERICK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

CITIZENS SERVICES BUILDING  
401 Sagner Ave.  
Frederick, MD 21701

## MINUTES of the April 24, 2018 Meeting

- I. The meeting was held at Winchester Hall, and called to order by Chair Mari Lee. An invitation was extended to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. The following members were present: Mari Lee, Lisa Clark, Lee Whisner, Francisco Alves, Adam Book, Chris Isleib, and Gene Stanton. FPD representative Captain Patrick Grossman was present. Members of the public who were present included Blair Pettrey and Diane Creedon. David Key attended and was the guest speaker.
- III. Guest speaker David Key presented very informative remarks on the history and activities of AARCH, which stands for "African American Resources – Cultural and Heritage." It was formed in 2000 after being proposed by the late William O. Lee, Jr., who was the principal at West Frederick High School and a city alderman. Mr. Lee led tours that showcased black history in Frederick, wrote a book and wanted to open a museum. Mr. Key is now the President of AARCH and is working on many different issues, including bringing recognition to the former Lincoln High School, which at one time was the only high school for African American students in Frederick. He is proud that the name "Lincoln" was recently put back on the building, when its name was changed and it reopened as Lincoln Elementary School.

Mr. Key said that the members of AARCH feel it is very important to tell local history in a way that accurately expresses how African Americans experienced it.

Mr. Key said that one of AARCH's big events is a "Living Treasures Banquet" that celebrates and recognizes local African Americans who are age 90 and older. Oral histories have been compiled on many of them. AARCH is also hoping to host a special event at the Weinberg Center for the Arts in Frederick. This would be symbolic because in its previous incarnation as the Tivoli Theatre it was segregated, and African Americans were required to sit in the balcony. Mr. Key said that many African Americans still do not want to go to the Weinberg today because of past discrimination. Mr. Key said that one idea that is being considered is to use the old balcony sign that said "Colored" to create a VIP section to acknowledge what people had to endure in those days.

Mr. Key said that AARCH is very active in cleaning up African American cemeteries, especially at many smaller African American churches in outlying areas that are now closed. He said there are 24 African American cemeteries in Frederick County, but many of them are hard to find. AARCH tries to schedule two cemetery clean up dates each year. At a recent event brush was cleared from 31 tombstones – about half those in the entire location.

AARCH has a table at many local events, and is trying to make presentations on African American history at some public schools.

IV. Comments from Law Enforcement:

Captain Grossman reported that two lateral hires are coming, along with one recent police academy graduate. Twelve academy recruits will start in May.

V. Officer and Committee Reports

Funds on hand in the amount of \$4,169.70 were reported, but this will change after a final tally of awards dinner receipts and expenses is completed.

Members of the Government Relations Committee will be meeting with FCPS Director of Student Services (and HRC liaison) Jet Reid to discuss suspension statistics. They also hope to meet with a school teacher to get a “front line” report on how suspensions are working. Lee Whisner suggested that the GUILD program at TJHS should be contacted, because it is run by a teacher who works with students who have been suspended. Lisa Clark suggested that David Keane would be a good principal to speak with about suspensions.

The IRC reported that plans are being made to participate in the County Housing Department’s “June Bloom” housing fair on Saturday, June 16. David Kaye will speak about housing discrimination and fair housing laws. HRD will have a table at the event and will have materials on housing discrimination and how to file complaints with government agencies.

VI. Old Business

Reports were given about the Friends Meeting School Student Peace Awards and Conference on April 14, the upcoming HRC Awards Dinner, and the HRC Retreat on April 7.

VII. New Business

The Asbury United Methodist Church’s annual block party will take place on Saturday, June 23. HRC will have a table at the event and members are encouraged to attend and participate. Frederick County is soliciting applications for a number of boards and commissions, including an upcoming vacancy on the HRC that begins on July 1, 2018.

VIII. Members who chose to do so made brief final comments.

IX. The meeting was adjourned.